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# California GARDEN



**September  
1937**

The Healing Power  
of a Garden

*By Gertrude Evans*

•

The Burbank  
Gardens

•

September Planting

•

Question Box

*By R. R. McLean*

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PRINTED MONTHLY BY

## The San Diego Floral Association

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO  
P. O. Box 323, San Diego, Cal.

Main Office, San Diego, California

John D. Wimmer, Editor

September, 1937

Vol. 29

No. 3

Entered as second-class matter December 8, 1910, at the Post Office at Point Loma, California, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

California Garden is on the list of publications authorized by the San Diego Retail Merchants Association.

Rates on Request

Advertising Copy should be in by the 25th of preceding month.

Subscription to Magazine, \$1.00 per year; Membership \$1.50 per year; Magazine and Membership combined, \$2.00 per year.

Meeting held third Tuesday of each month at Floral Bldg., Balboa Park, 7:30 P. M.

Toft Printing Co., 1129 2nd St., San Diego

## The Healing Power of a Garden

By GERTRUDE EVANS

It is a wonderful experience to have a small bit of our own good earth come into one's life, especially if the ties with the past have all been broken and one seems afloat searching for a place to belong; to find a place to work, for isn't work our salvation? I felt that now was the chance to bring some of the beauty I had lived with out of my bit of sod and a ray of sunshine.

"My walls outside must have some flowers,

My walls within must have some books.

A house that's small, a garden large  
And in it leafy nooks."

I would add seats a plenty with backgrounds galore to invite dreams and books and intimate talks and tea. Does tea ever taste as comforting and good as in a garden or roadside garden restaurant, by the water or on a steamer? I've found not.

Isn't it wonderful to find a palette in your hands with all the colors of the rainbow with which to paint, to find a place to gamble with your little all to create beauty. It's all glorious, entrancing. It grows to be the one important thing in your life. Everything has to give way to it. You need material things—perhaps a trip, to "go places" as is so necessary these days, but no, you can't have them for the garden has to be fed—sprays, pow-

ders, fertilizers and the gardener must be paid.

In Switzerland we were caught in the great war and owing to illness we could not get home. There we stayed in a heavenly place on the shores of Lake Geneva but with the sound of cannons in our ears. The war over I came back to Boston. In its closely built-in streets I felt I could hardly breathe. I missed the freer, beautiful outlook I had for four years. I was a wreck, an invalid and finding that the climate of New England and Europe was too severe for me I came out to a friend in Pasadena in the fall of 1919. I spent the winter searching for a home where I could look about and breathe. I found nothing that I could afford and came down to San Diego where I found my little, shabby Italian house over-looking Mission Valley over-hanging a lovely, peaceful, quieting view—even to the cows browsing in the depths. I saw the possibilities of making it a beautiful spot.

At first I was too ill to superintend any planting. I only asked for Italian Cypressess where I could see them as soon as my eyes opened in the mornings. Groups of them were planted in my canyon. There was a narrow strip of lawn in front of my house and daily I was helped out there to lie on a thick rug and crawl about for hours to dig up Devil Grass as it came up. I found,

as you all know, plenty to dig out but it was work, my salvation. Despite my iron persistence, that summers work failed to eradicate the Bermuda but health was creeping back to me. Soon I began to think of the garden and walls. Much living, not just traveling, in Europe taught me the beauty, romance and intimacy of the enclosed garden in comparison to our "in the streets" and "curtains all up nights" American fashion. Southern Europe knows the art of out-door living exceedingly well. The people are simple and happy. I believe it is the enclosed courts filled with potted plants, the gardens and the life in the sun that makes them carefree and healthy. If they have no gardens they spill over into the streets and sidewalks, even taking their sewing machines along, their love making and all sorts of work. I loved it all.

All this beauty of living I tried to crowd into my new great adventure and gamble. I found the part of my land beside the house, that which I now call my court, filled with fruit trees and all sorts of bushes. These I had all removed and small beds made against the wall and the center graded. I happily left two *Leptospermums*,—bushes some few feet tall which now have become my center of interest for they are large trees of great usefulness and comfort. Under them frolic most of my *Azaleas* and there are several seats which form a background where many teas, both large and small have found a shady comfortable place. I have several outlets for heating



of water for making tea. The urge for pots has grown upon me so much that shortly ago I was told with much reproach in the eyes that I had four hundred to be watered. Of course many of them are "pricked offs" two and three inch pots but still pots that wanted to drink.

Miss Kate Sessions made me a lovely pool and with her usual interest and generosity superintended the work herself. In the pool I've kept blue water lilies, "Triumph" and always one white one. The center of the court tries its best to be a blue grass lawn. Had I tiled it or bricked it I would have many dollars in my pocket and more beauty besides. The shapes of the flower beds have been changed many times and the last time by Mr. Roland Hoyt's nice, artistic taste.

The first spring I had a glorious surprise when my wonderful *Wisteria multijuga* sprang into life leaving me breathless with joy. The racemes are sometimes thirty inches long. As one walks under them they caress your face with fragrance. There is another more modest pink *Wisteria*, then a lavender one a little bolder. They have to be seen to be understood. This dear old pergola with its jewels I found here, curving around my horse-shoe canyon. They complete my consecration to the garden. Without consecration, the pulling together of all your powers, you can't be a really successful garden worker. At the end of the Pergola, I had an Italian gardener make me an Italian Belvedere, where I could look to the ocean and the foothills. Alas! Many planting of trees in the neighborhood have taken most of this view.

In 1922 I felt well enough to really work. My first plan for the canyon was to have it dressed all in blue. I invested to an unbelievable extent in dark blue Lilac. As they died I bought more and more before I finally gave up. Now only one is left and that is never watered. They died if I watered or did not water but the blue hillside is still with me. I have beds of blue Iris, blue Plumbago and blue Agapanthus which satisfy me.

Now may I tell you how I came

to love Iris? It was in 1911. We were in Italy spending the spring and summer in the Blue Nun's Monastery in Fiesole, just above Florence. Almost every day which was not too hot we drove down to Florence to the pictures and other treasures we lived among. One day we were walking through some of the dear, narrow, crowded streets when we came upon a large shop window a blaze of glory with Iris. We had never seen such beauty. We went in and were received like long lost friends, not shoppers, for we were treated like guests. That is the great charm of going among the little shops in Italy where the choicest things are kept. We visit, we do not shop and still things do get into our bags and the charge got over quickly. We feel almost to have had a gift. Mr. Evans used to say, "I feel as though I'd been to a tea party." Our health and happiness was discussed and advised about—generally "Camomile Tisane." We came away with a huge bunch of Iris with buds so that our pleasure should be drawn out for many days.

It was not until 1922 that I drove up to Moneto to Mrs. Dean's Iris Garden and invested, with trembling, forty dollars for thirty-six varieties of Iris. The most expensive was the San Gabriel but its beauty and value seemed so worth while. It's the earliest to bloom, late February and lasts about two months. You do not have to stoop to search its fragrance for it comes to you as you carelessly pass it with its "please look and love me air." I have had blooms over eight feet in height. The Alta California and Shining Water made a dent in my preference because of their early friendliness. They multiply very rapidly so you can give some away which is one of the greatest pleasures that a gardener can have.

Soon after my purchase I asked some questions about Iris at one of our Tuesday Floral Association meetings and was told that I had wasted my money for Iris would not grow in San Diego. I was flabbergasted but went ahead and planted them to find their answer almost came true. They grew, but they didn't bloom for the south

wall had turned my Iris bed into a north bed where it was too damp and dark. Then Italy called me so insistently that I yielded and in 1924 sailed for Naples which is the best and most fascinating place to enter Europe. Again I steeped in Italian sunshine and Italian beauty through Cara, up the steep hill to Ravello to see my favorite garden, Palazzo Rufolo. It is this garden that I've tried to copy in a measure in "La Collina Ridente" of mine which falls down into Mission Valley while Rufolo's feet reach the Mediterranean. It is a ravishing garden, run down a little, but still beautiful in its setting. Next I was again carried up the long line of steps to my beloved Capuchin Monastery to see the beauties of the lily pond that inspired my own little one. Visitors are not desired to stay long; they cater more to transients, but I made love so ardently to the monks that I have been allowed several quite long visits. Then on to Rome and Florence and peeped at all my old beloved places.

When I returned home my Iris were a disappointment for they had refused to bloom in my absence. I moved them into the sun and to where they had good drainage and they have become wonderfully cheerful and willing to flower.

I take them up every three years—just when blooming is over—separate them and replant. With early planting and kept well watered during the summer they will usually bloom the following spring. I was told when I first planted Iris to use only a little well rotted manure dug into the soil so as not to touch the rhizome. The rhizome itself should float like a duck on the water just a tiny covering of earth so that their backs could be tanned, a fashion which has spread to us humans. Mr. Salzbach tells me that he has such wonderful bulb soil that he doesn't need much fertilizer, just a little bone which is always our safest fertilizer for any plant. Mr. Milikens uses a great deal of fertilizer which I am coming to do. Recently feeling that I was soon to leave my house I wanted to take samples of a few things

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# The Burbank Gardens . . .

By A. M. G.

Just north of Santa Rosa on the Redwood Highway, we were arrested by a pleasant sight; a forty acre tract, several substantial looking buildings, a small white, cozy home, many trees, flower beds galore, a neat white picket fence enclosure, over the gate the following inscription:

*"Home Experimental Gardens of Luther Burbank.*

*In memory of our citizen of the world, whose love for youth and growing things was expressed in the work done in these gardens, the perpetual stewardship of these grounds and its plants is now vested through the generosity of Mrs. Burbank, in the Junior College of Santa Rosa for the use and benefit of the students of the Botanical Department."*

In a twinkling of an eye we were inside that white fence and stepping on semi-hallowed ground, the former home of Luther Burbank.

The area at present occupied by plants and trees includes one and one-fourth acres of the original Burbank Gardens. A number of rare trees and shrubs were planted years ago, among them various Burbank fruits and nuts, with shade and ornamental trees and shrubs to beautify the grounds. Some of these have made astonishing growth, attesting agreeable soil and climatic conditions. Noteworthy among these are the flowering locust, Chinese elm, redwoods, blue spruces, the towering eucalyptus and poplar species, the Burbank hybrid mulberry with its luxuriant foliage, a rare Mexican pine, the weeping poplar, the curious ringed willow and others.

Transcending all other features of the garden the beautiful double spire of the Cedar of Lebanon spreads its great branches and shelters the final resting place of its illustrious planter. The symmetrical Bunya Bunya tree, *Araucaria bidwellii*, appears in the background as one faces the buildings and trees looking north. The gigantic Paradox Hybrid Walnut (Persian California black combination), scarce

thirty years old, with average diameter increase of over an inch a year, amazes everyone who stands beneath its great canopy of foliage.

The main open space has been arranged in a formal plan with wide walks, grass borders and flower beds. Some of the many Burbank flower varieties are to be seen, both the annual and perennial types. Subdivisions of the original selections of Shasta daisies, made under the personal attention of Mr. Burbank bloom every year in due season. Clumps of spineless and fruiting cactus plants represent many years of painstaking and often painful effort and labor.

New Zealand Flax, with its stiff broadsword leaves, and tenacious fibres, the curious Chinese briar grape, flaming oriental Poppies, the *Tritoma* hybrids, "floral exclamation points", stately Delphiniums, blue and pink Petunas, horn Poppies, succulents and other dry-land plants, vivid flame and crimson California Poppies and many others add to the interest of the planting.

In all there are upwards of 500 species of plants, vines, shrubs and trees. To these might be added a considerable number represented in Mrs. Burbank's private area.

The world renown of Luther Burbank leads great numbers of travelers to visit the Luther Burbank Gardens, just as it led us.

In speaking of Burbank, the man, Elizabeth Burbank tells us; "When he was nothing more than a boy in the hills and intervals and along the brooks of his rugged New England home, Luther Burbank made two interesting discoveries that put an end to his family's plan for him to become a business man, a doctor, a manufacturer, or an artist. He discovered that in Nature a constant change and improvement were going on, and that these changes and improvements might be guided and taken advantage of for humanity's benefit. In spite of the doubts of his family, as to its advisability, he announced that he was going to find a better climate and soil than those of

New England and devote his life to what he called training plants to work for man."

"In 1876 Luther Burbank came to Santa Rosa and here he worked for more than fifty years, first demonstrating the simpler laws that governed the new science of plant improvement, then discovering the more complex laws and putting them into practice and finally giving the world such a wealth of new flowers, fruits and vegetables as not even he had dreamed of in the beginning."

"From the first he financed his work, which was both costly and complex, by selling his wares, nursery stock, plants, seeds,—and word got around that they were of high quality and that he himself was dependable and honest. This reputation made him successful as a nurseryman and that success he turned into money to carry on his daring new experiments. But he was not considered a world figure, until in 1893 he issued a thin bulletin that he called, 'New Creation in Fruits and Flowers'."

"There was a great stir over this announcement bulletin of his; could it be possible that here were listed an entirely new number of products! The world began to talk about him, to try his discoveries widely and to benefit by them."

"In two particulars Mr. Burbank differed from any man who ever worked with plants to improve them; first, he learned from a study of natural laws how to speed up their development so that he could accomplish more with them in a short space of time; second, he did all his experiments on a wholesale scale. Because of this he was able to accomplish in his lifetime what others could not even approach. He carried on as many as a thousand experiments at one time, growing perhaps ten or fifty or a hundred thousand plants in each experiment. He crowded the lifework of three or four men into on span of little more than fifty years. Besides this he studied, wrote, lectured, met thousands of people, interested himself in worthy enterprises, in children, in animals, learned about other men and other occupations and activi-

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# Notes and Comment . . .

## How To Prune Italian Cypress

In the very excellent book "How to Prune Western Shrubs" by R. Sanford Martin the following information is both valuable and interesting.

*Due to their tremendous popularity the new plants could not be raised fast enough from properly selected cuttings so they were grown in large quantities from seed that had been allowed to cross pollinate with other varieties. The result is now, that we have a great many supposedly Italian Cypress that are off type and never will be perfected specimens. Although with good care these same plants can be made to look very much like the perfect type of tree.*

*When these Cypress trees begin to send out side branches that show a tendency to fall away from the main column of the plant, do not under any circumstances tie them back in place. This method merely prolongs the agony of a complete failure of the type desired. When these branches first start to pull away from the main column, cut off the end just a little inside of where it leaves the outside of the body of the tree. This will cause lateral growth to shoot out below the cut and the hole that was made by the removal of the branch will soon be filled, and what is more important, the sturdiness of the plant will be greatly increased. A light trimming of the outside tips will smooth up the general appearance, where the tree is used as a formal specimen.*

## About Town

At the north-east corner of Herschel and Silverado streets in La Jolla a number of choice plants were set out by a Mr. Smith some twenty years ago. Today, the *Eucalyptus ficifolia* at the rear of the house is in full bloom and is an extra fine large specimen. At the front of the house is, perhaps, the largest *Eugenia myrtifolia* to be seen anywhere in the city and makes one have real sympathy for the hundreds of specimens everywhere which are sheared continually, mak-

ing stiff formal plants located close to the houses with no individuality. On the Herschel street side of the original property—by the house No. 7917—is a rare large shrub bearing white flowers during July which is a *Baphia racemosa*. This plant belongs to the pea family and is native in Tropical and South Africa.

K. O. S.

## Gerbera

A few do's and don'ts for those who like growing Transvaal Daisies. **DON'T PLANT:**

in the shade.  
where drainage is poor.  
where lawn watering will keep them too wet.  
so deeply that the crown is covered.

**DO PLANT:**

strong, clean roots.  
about a foot apart.  
in medium rich soil—sandy loam or adobe are equally good.

**DO:**

water thoroughly when root is first set out.  
irrigate only when ground is really dry—every three or four weeks.

## Scars

Planting slopes of street grades with seeds of native plants to prevent erosion and also to cover unsightly scars has been completed by a park superintendent. In one case two washtubs full of mustard, castor bean, native grasses and chaparral were planted in the belief that only a few weeks would be required to cover the scars.

**QUESTION:** My little girl has a scar on her face from a recent attack of chickenpox. Is there any way to get rid of it?

**ANSWER:** Sure. Try a cactus poultice. Get the the new leaves of the prickly pear, stick them on a big fork and burn off the prickles. Peel and grind in the meat grinder. Make a poultice and bind it on the scar at night. In time it will be gone.—Desert Plant Life.

Plant Copper Beech and Crabapple in our mountains for there they will flourish. If you do not have a mountain cabin give such plants to your friends.

## Scale

The newly hatched young of most scale insects appear in summer and early September and it is necessary to spray with an oil emulsion. Spraying these pests while they are still in the crawler stage is a most effective means of control. Generally one spraying at this time is sufficient to protect the tree for a year, while spraying attempts after the scale insects have developed their hard protective coatings are not nearly so effective.

A 2% solution (1 to 50) is usually the correct strength for summer spraying though in cases where the trees are heavily infested (for instance, purple scale or red scale on citrus) it may be necessary to increase the strength to 3% and to make two applications during the year. This drastic treatment should be applied only as a last resort, for trees such as oranges will suffer to the extent of dropping foliage and small fruit.

\* \* \*

## Vegetables

If you are planning a fall vegetable garden be sure to have the proper pest control material on hand for it too. Your nursery or seedsman can supply you with the proper dusting materials to control aphids, thrips, worms, etc. Use sulphur on certain plants such as beans and peas to control mildew and rust.

Caution must be used in applying sprays and dusts to vegetables so that poison residue is not left on edible portions of the plant. The government is making extensive tests to see to what extent these poison residues are causing stomach and other troubles and it recommended that we use such chemicals as lead arsenate and calcium arsenate only on vegetables before the edible portion appears or on plants such as peppers and tomatoes where the fruit or vegetable can be carefully washed.

T. McM.



# Question Box . . .

By R. R. McLean

**QUESTION:** I have not been in California long and would like to know something about planting lima beans for a home garden. Please tell me when they should be planted or if it is still too early now. How long after planting will it be before the beans get big enough to use? What varieties are best? Thank you. Mrs. W. B.

**ANSWER:** Lima beans cannot be planted until after the rains are over. This means it will be April or early May before it will be safe to plant. Limas rot quite easily in a wet, cold soil, hence the injunction to wait until the weather warms up and the ground is relatively dry and warm. Depending upon the variety, it takes from 65 to 85 days after planting for the beans to be ready for use.

As to varieties, this is partly a matter of opinion. For home use, growers usually plant one of the dwarf bush types, of which there are a number of varieties. Pole limas can also be obtained, having the advantage of taking up less space but, of course, requiring more labor in poling. Your seeds dealer can give you very definite information concerning the most satisfactory type grown locally.

**QUESTION:** I am somewhat confused by the different terms describing lime. Sometimes it is called limestone, or quick lime, or slacked lime, or hydrated lime, or lime carbonate, or burnt lime. Will you please describe them and also state what form is best to use, if there should be any difference.

L. S.

**ANSWER:** It is not strange that this confusion exists, as the term "lime" is used entirely too loosely. It is ordinarily employed in the place of the word calcium, and as there are many forms of calcium, this adds to the confusion. There are four principal calcium compounds used in agriculture for the purpose of soil amendment, or in some cases fertilizer. They are: (1) Calcium carbonate, or limestone, or lime carbonate; (2) Calcium oxide or quick lime or burnt lime. (3) Calcium sulphate, or gypsum, or lime sulphate; (4) Calcium hydroxide or

slacked lime. Where the word lime is used alone without further explanation of what is meant, one cannot know definitely which lime compound is referred to. (1) Calcium carbonate, or carbonate of lime is found in a natural state in rock deposits such as marl and in shells, etc. Pure carbonate of lime contains approximately 40% of the element calcium. When used for agricultural purposes, the materials just named are finely ground and applied without any further treatment.

(2) Burnt lime, or quick lime as it is commonly called, results from the burning of raw limestone or similar material. After the burning process and the driving off of carbon dioxide and other impurities, the actual calcium content is raised to something over 71% in the pure article, or nearly twice that of raw limestone. The actual value of lime, it must be remembered, is largely measured by its calcium content although this factor cannot always be considered in determining which lime to use in any given case.

(3) Calcium sulphate or gypsum, will not be considered at this time as by reason of its combination with sulphur it has a slightly different use in agriculture. Pure gypsum, it may be said contains 18.6% sulphur and 23.25 per cent calcium.

(4) The fourth class of lime mentioned, calcium hydroxide or slaked lime is obtained by adding water to burnt lime or calcium oxide. The water and calcium oxide combine and at the same time give off heat. Hydrated or slaked lime contains approximately 54% actual calcium.

There is still another form of lime to be considered, that known as air-slaked. When burnt lime or calcium oxide is slaked with water, forming calcium hydroxide or slaked lime, a dry powder results. If left any length of time exposed to air moisture, carbon dioxide is absorbed which changes the water slaked lime to a mixture of the original calcium carbonate or raw lime, and slaked lime.

Now as to the use of the forms of lime described. Burnt lime or calcium

cause of its corrosive action is not often used in any quantity. It combines very readily with moisture in the soil, giving out heat, and will burn or char humus that may be contained therein. oxide is a very powerful base and be- It also liberates nitrogenous compounds in the soil, causing them to be lost where it is necessary to immediately neutralize the acids in heavy soils. This form can be used in small amounts, having in mind its limitations. It is not generally advisable, however.

Slaked lime or calcium hydroxide is also a very powerful base and will readily neutralize acid or sour soils. It also dissolves humus to some extent and by its caustic action liberates ammonia, or nitrogen. It must also be used with care on ordinary soils.

Finely ground limestone, or shells or marl, or beet sugar lime, these forms being carbonate of lime, are insoluble in water but are quickly acted upon by the acids resulting from decaying vegetable matter in the soil. Because there is a mutual reaction between this form of lime and vegetable matter in the soil, humus is produced, which is of course desirable. This form of lime will also correct soil acidity.

Dr. Snowden, a noted soil chemist, recommends the following procedure in the use of limes:

For acid soils where quick action is desired, either quick lime (calcium oxide) or the slaked (calcium hydroxide) either of which will destroy the humus and injure tender crops. Carbonate forms (limestone, shells, etc.,) when ground very fine, act as quickly as the caustic limes and will not destroy humus or injure growing crops. For turning under with green manure use the carbonate or both this and the sulphate (gypsum). For liberating plant foods they are most active in the order following, sulphate (gypsum), caustic (burnt lime and slaked lime), and the carbonate. For opening up heavy clay soils and caustic forms, the sulphate or the carbonate. For improving sandy soils use the hydrated (slaked) which later becomes carbonate.

**QUESTION:** (1) Will you kindly tell me if I will need to plant two or more sapotes in order to get fruit? I have two trees grown from seed—they go almost straight up with few  
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## Question Box

branches. What can be done to induce them to branch? (2) How about papayas—is one plant in a place sufficient to insure fruit? I have tried to grow papayas from seed, using a cold frame to start them in, but as soon as the young plants get five or six inches high they die, the stem rotting above the ground. Can you tell me what the trouble is and how it can be remedied?

Mrs. L. M.

**ANSWER:** *Sapotes* are self-fertile; one tree in a location is all that is necessary. To induce branching, the young trees should have the terminal bud removed when they are about 3 or 4 feet high. Otherwise they may make height but few side branches.

Papayas, except in special cases, do not bear perfect flowers, but have the female flowers on one plant and male on another. It is therefore necessary to plant three or four in a group in order that pollination may be insured.

The rotting of papaya stems is not confined to young seedlings, but is sometimes the cause of loss of older plants also. About all that can be done to prevent fungus attack in the case of young seedlings is to disinfect the seed and the soil, and pay particular attention to irrigation and ventilation, if a cold frame is used. Dip the seed in a mercuric chloride (bichloride of mercury or corrosive sublimate) solution for two or three minutes, using one tablet 7.3 grains, to a pint of water. Then spread out to dry or plant immediately.

The seed bed should be disinfected with a formaldehyde solution, one pint of formaldehyde to 15 gallons of water. Drench the bed thoroughly as well as the frame, if a cold frame is used. If covered with sacks to hold the gas in, a more effective fumigation can be given. The seed can be planted within 3 or 4 days after disinfection if all traces of formaldehyde odor have vanished.

Irrigation should only be given to seedlings or young plants in the morning and only on bright, warm days. It is important that the surface of the seed bed be dry by night. A thin layer of sand over the bed will aid in

quickly drying out the surface. Ventilation is extremely important—if in frames. A warm moist atmosphere continuously maintained, with little or no ventilation, will inevitably result in rotting of the plant stems.

**QUESTION:** I have not had very much success in growing either azaleas or camellias here. I have given them what I supposed was good care but they simply have not done well. Are there any special requirements for growing these plants here that should be observed? Any information you can give me will be very thankfully received.

Mrs. F. L.

**ANSWER:** Soil and moisture requirements are somewhat more exacting for azaleas and camellias than for many other plants and in the case of azaleas particularly a dry atmosphere is especially hard to withstand. With reference to camellias, which are easier to grow in the south than are azaleas, Butterfield, U. of C. states: "Camellias like a warm, moist climate, and a well-drained soil that has a good water supply. \* \* \* In planting camellias very cool, drafty situations are to be avoided." A camellia plant should never be permitted to suffer for moisture. A fertile soil is required and enough organic matter should be added each year to keep the camellia in a vigorous condition. Shading the blooms a little during the blooming period may help to prevent sunburn. Blasting is apt to result if the petals or opening buds are wetted. A fungus trouble also attacks the flowers at times and may be discouraged by avoiding wetting, especially over night. It will also be found of advantage to use plenty of oak and pine needle leaf mold around camellias, as they need a slightly acid soil. Practically all of our southern California soils in areas where the rainfall is low are far more alkaline than acid.

Azaleas, according to Butterfield, "need a very well-drained slightly acid soil. This requirement is easily met by planting in a soil mixed with German or Swedish peat or oak leaf mold. Pine needles are useful in keeping the soil slightly acid and in good condition. Barnyard manure is not suitable because the ash is alkaline. An acid fertilizer like ammonium sulphate might be added if the nitrogen supply cannot be kept up by leaf mold and pine needles. Watering is even

## Melaleuca Leucadendron

By K. O. SESSIONS

The *Melaleuca* shrubs about the city are quite prominent in variety, especially in the Park, but this variety which becomes a tall tree is not common. It is a native of India and of Australia and widely distributed but varies in size from shrubs to tree specimens depending on the location. Its leaves are four to six inches long and one-half inch wide and from them is produced the medicinal oil of Cajuput. It is commonly called the Punk Tree. The oil has many uses. For colds it is inhaled, for rheumatic pains it is rubbed on and it is also used for toothache.

One of the most interesting features about the plant is its white bark composed of layers of the thinnest and finest tissue. The bark sheds yearly and is used by natives for shields, for boats, for roofing and for packing fruits. It is more lasting than timber and more interesting than white birch bark. It has artistic values too and would be very suitable for window boxes, bird houses and rustic work.

This *Melaleuca* is the most individual and interesting of them all. Its name means "white tree." The finest old specimen is at the Thomas Hamilton garden on Point Loma. A group of several large plants is at Westergaard's cut flower nursery at Pacific Beach. This interesting plant stands drought and poor soil conditions better than the *Eucalyptus*.

K. O. Sessions

more important than having the soil slightly acid. Heavy soils need to be lightened to insure good drainage. Water should be added often enough to keep the plants in good growing condition, especially through the fall and early winter when the plants might suffer. Buds for the next flower crop are being formed at this time and these flower buds may abort or fail to develop if the plants are neglected. A good mulch of leaf mold around each plant is helpful. The soil and moisture difficulties mentioned will account for most failures.

# Book Reviews . . . . .

By S. S. BERRY

## PLANT PROPAGATION FOR THE GARDEN

By David C. Fairburn

(Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., Garden City, 1936. \$1.00).

In this well arranged and pleasantly written primer on plant propagation we are offered one of the best of the excellent little Doubleday Dollar Garden Books. The professional plantsman has most of the subject matter literally at his finger tips, but to the inexperienced amateur, such a book is at once a boon and an investment which will pay incredible dividends. In a clear manner, not without a touch of humor now and then, easily comprehended directions are given for increasing one's stock of any desired type of plant, whether by seeds, bulbs, offsets, cuttings, layers, buds, or grafts. The book is printed in good type and well illustrated.

## ADVENTURES WITH SMALL BULBS

By Louise Beebe Wilder

(The Macmillan Co., New York, 1936. \$5.00).

Those jolly little packages of anticipatory pleasure, the bulbs! Who ever tires, either of growing more and more of them, or of reading good literature about them? Certainly it is a privilege to read in this book what one of our pleasantest and most experienced writers has to tell of them. It is frankly personal, as is usual with Mrs. Wilder's writings, but the reader only gains thereby. It differs from most of its predecessors, however, in that it rejects the discursive narrative style we have come to anticipate in a Wilder book, for an alphabetical and more encyclopaedic format. This renders it an easy vol-

ume for quick consultation, yet withal it remains eminently readable. As a sort of prologue, some sound general hints on culture are given, followed by a chapter on naturalizing, and two more devoted to the use of bulbs in the rock-garden. Part II is the encyclopaedia, and the bulky part of the book. It is especially good in its treatment of the genera *Crocus*, *Erythronium*, and *Muscari*. We recall no more sympathetic or thorough handling of those very Victorian flowers, the double Daffodils. The rest of the Daffodil section is also good, especially when treating of the lesser types, despite the fact that the list of recommended garden varieties leaves a very great deal to be desired. It is pleasant to find *Calochortus*, *Brodiaea*, *Camassia*, and others among our own western natives leaves a very great deal to be book, but treated with appreciative honor. Indeed the author finds the blending of blue and green in the unexpanded flowers of deep blue *Camassias* to be one of the loveliest color effects in nature. She likes to use these flowers in association with late tulips. Another appealingly beautiful suggestion is the vision of *Tulipa clusiana* behind the citrine form of *Alyssum saxatile*. Bulb-planting time with Mrs. Wilder extends from the first of August through November. We wonder whether she has ever tried still earlier planting, say June, for some of her choicer Daffodils.

The author's well advertised ire against the Plant Quarantine leads her again to the attack in these pages, but perhaps a little too indiscriminately to seem entirely fair. In the case of the Daffodil "famine," for example, it is probable

that never have so many really fine varieties been available in America as the past year just prior to the announced lifting of the quarantine. We completely fail to understand the aptitude of her caustic comment about Snowdrops, for importation of *Galanthus* has been quite as free as that of the Tulip (Continued on Page 9)



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# September Planting . . .

September is the month in which to begin to plan for your winter and spring garden. If you want certain flowers for Christmas they must be started early so that they can get good growth during the remaining warm weather. It is well to remember that as the decorative berry bearing shrubs come into fruition it is pruning time for them. As you cut the branches for use in the house bear in mind the need of most of these plants for thinning. As an example consider the Cotonasters. They are the most abused of plants as to care. By regular pruning they can be kept the same size year after year and loaded with long sprays of berries. The berries are born on one year old wood only. After the plant is three years old cut the branches which have berried—that is wood which has passed two complete seasons—to 8 to 10 inch stubs. The new growth induced will make almost its entire growth the first season and will take the lovely, graceful, drooping form which we admire in the Cotonaster. What has been said of this family is true also for the Pyracanthas. Hydrangeas have finished blooming and need to be pruned. To produce the finest flowers all the old flowering stems should be cut back to two or three buds.

## Seeds:

**Linaria**, that dainty little annual so good for bedding or cut flowers may be planted this month. The variety *Fairy Bouquet* is a compact and larger flowering type. **Lobelia**: there is scarcely anything that equals it for low edgings, and its almost true blue color is highly prized. Try *Lobelia compacta* Emperor William for a bright cornflower blue. **Petunias**: We are not of that limited group of gardeners who look down their noses at the *Petunia* lover. Nothing can take its place as a reliable filler of beds at all seasons. Richard Diener of Oxnard, California, has perhaps the finest collection and his catalogue should be seen by everyone. See the rich new colors, *Flaming Vel-*

*vet*, *Purple Double* and *Diener's Blue*, the last a fine semi-dwarf one. The catalogue also gives detailed instructions on how to grow the seed. Last month Miss Sessions wrote about *Violas* which in their good clear colors are the equal of *Lobelia* for edging purposes. **Ice-Land Poppies**, (*Papaver nudicale*) should be in every garden, at least the cutting garden. Sow where they are to bloom or in flats and transplant when young. Try the varieties *Empress* (salmon rose and pink) and *Emperor* (good orange). **Calendulas**: Here is another old favorite and stand-by. Use some of the new types, *Radio* (orange with quilled petals) *Lemon Queen* (lemon yellow), *Balls White* (a long desired white). **Gaillardias**: Try *Burgundy* and *Golden Yellow*. **Stocks** and **Snapdragons** should be planted this month for winter bloom. Last to be mentioned are *Sweet Peas*, the winter flowering types. We all know how well the trench must be prepared and how it is best to have the bed made several weeks before planting the seed and that it is best to have the bed run north and south and that the prevailing wind should blow the vines against the trellis and not away from it. *Early Daphne* is a good new soft salmon pink, *Harmony* is one of the best lavenders, *Embers* of orange salmon and *Illumination* a strong clean red.

## Bulbs:

**Watsonias**. These South Africans should be planted this month for they deteriorate if not planted early. They are tough relatives of the garden gladiolus and in some respects, their ease of culture and cutting value, should rank with them in popularity. Plant the bulbs (corms) in any good garden soil about five inches deep and remember they prefer sunshine. Most of the growth will be made during the rainy season and so they need scarcely any attention. Look for the new colors, mauve, flesh-pink, coral and orange-scarlet. There is a beautiful pure white species known as *Watsonia Ardneri*.

**Freesias**. Almost everyone loves these fragrant spring flowers. They too, are visitors from South Africa who like our climate very much. They may be planted from early September into November and like a sunny bed of light sandy soil. Place the little bulbs with the "teeth" up about two or three inches below the surface and about as far apart. If you can have a bed which does not need summer planting let them go dry and they will cheerfully come up the next year in greatly increased numbers. If you need the space dig them up when the leaves have dried. There are many named varieties to choose from. *Ixias*, *Sparaxis* and *Babianias* are all relatives which require only the same easy culture as the *Freesias*.

**Narcissus**. We use the word to include the whole tribe, *Daffodils*, *Jonquils*, *Poeticus*, *Tazettas*, whatever the colloquial significance to you for each name. Southern California is not ideal for all of them for they are rain lovers and came from the mountains of Europe. Yet they are such happy and gay flowers that no spring garden seems complete without them. The situation of the bed is not tremendously important, although it is best to keep it from the strong western exposure. They grow well here in partial shade under open trees. It is well to consider that the flower usually turns its face to the south and so plan for that if they are to be viewed from a vantage point. Plant the big bulb varieties five or six inches down and the smaller ones not less than three. You will remember how much better *Narcissus* were last year after our wet winter which told us that they like lots of water. If a dry spell comes along during the winter months give them a good soaking. The bulbs may be left in the ground three or four years if you are not a specialist and should never be lifted in any year until the foliage has yellowed.

*Amaryllus* bulbs may be moved and divided this month, and *Gladiolus* corms should be lifted when the foliage has browned.



## Healing Garden

(Continued From Page 2)

and so put a few rhizomes of my favorite Iris into boxes. The result was surprising for I had never seen them grown in tubs. My Alta California, Easter Morn, Shining Water were magnificent and proud with a "look at me" air in their boxes. The boxes serve so well to fill out beds until the regular planting comes along. Can one find any place where a fine potted plant isn't an improvement? I'm strong for pots and boxes as fillers.

Europe is especially fond of Iris. Florence prizes them highly. One of the loveliest and most used crests engraved everywhere, on every conceivable thing one sees. Paris too uses them everywhere, the fleur de lis, the royal flower of France. The Sainte Chapelle, the loveliest chapel in Paris, contains the robe of St. Louis which is literally sown with them.

I shall always believe that an artistic garden can not be made without courage to cut down or trim severely or wholly take out our mistakes. Remove those things which spoil the picture. It is a Spartan virtue to keep the picture in shape. Isn't it by our own personal mistakes that we have to learn to trim ourselves into the right kind of life? Isn't it by mistakes that we learn the most in everything?

Let us learn to love our gardens and be in them at their loveliest—the early morning when the flowers are most chatty or the early evening, especially if the garden is dressed in white. Physicians should try to have their patients make gardens when possible. It creates healing and the feeling that there is something that depends on you for its very life. So dear friends, if you are left alone in the world, if old age is edging along—even if it has arrived, make some kind of a garden even if it has to be narrowed down to a window box or pots. I sometimes feel that my garden is all I've ever had that has given me much joy. This one is my first real dirt garden that I have been able to dig into; to hold in my hands some of our dear old earth.

## Burbank Gardens

(Continued From Page 3)

ties, so that he could talk with and enjoy almost any man or woman who came to see him,—in short filled his life with interests and knowledge such as very few have ever found time for."

"He was always pointing out that during a lifetime one could not do more than scratch the surface in the field of plant experimentation, and said and wrote again and again that young men and women would do well to look into the possibilities of plant breeding if they wanted to do something worthwhile for themselves and their fellowmen."

"Honors and fame came to Luther Burbank unsought. He loved people and had to be guarded by his family and friends to prevent him from giving too much of his energy to the problems of others. Children were his favorites; he loved animals, but particularly dogs. He accomplished incredible things in his life; but what gratified him most was that he won the world's love."

"When Luther Burbank died, Mrs. Burbank wanted to carry out a wish he had expressed; to be buried somewhere near his flowers. It was finally decided to make his last resting under the Cedar of Lebanon on the grounds in front of his first family home in Santa Rosa and of his greenhouse where so much of his important work was carried on. No stone or marker was placed above his head, for he often said, 'When I go, don't raise a monument to me; plant a tree.'"

A. M. G.

## Book Reviews

(Continued From Page 8)

and Hyacinth for some time. The dearth of the rarer varieties is due to quite other reasons than the malignant quarantine.

The book is abundantly and well illustrated, both by camera and drawing pen, but the cuts are not always well ordered. A convenient reference is sadly hindered by the lack of serial numbering or index-

## August Meeting

At the August meeting of the San Diego Floral Association, San Diego's famous florist—Miss Alice Rainford, discussed floral arrangements apropos of the Fall Flower Show to be held in Balboa Park the last Saturday and Sunday of the month.

An arrangement of orange clivia in a modernistic green vase led Miss Rainford to explain that the vase was really a Chinese pillow which could be made very comfortable with the addition of a heavy pad.

A typical florist's arrangement in a beautiful hand-worked California pottery bowl was made up of peach-glow gladioli, yellow zinnias and blue delphinium; and a formal arrangement was represented by blue and pink flowers in shallow Dresden trays set in a circle about porcelain figures.

The meeting closed with a brief talk by the Society's beloved Miss Sessions on South African heathers and other unusual plants which should be grown here.

ing. The letter press itself is quite well indexed.

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